

challenges with opioids, but Congress laid the groundwork for this work to be done at the State and local level with the passage of the SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act.

A HISTORIC FIGHT FOR FREEDOM AND AUTONOMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT) for 5 minutes.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, I want to spend my 5 minutes to tell a story, a history story from the Virgin Islands.

This month and for the next 6 months in the Virgin Islands, we commemorate a historic fight for freedom and autonomy. On the small, 20-square-mile island of St. John, one of the earliest and longest lasting slave rebellions began on November 23, 1733. This rebellion was preceded by incomparable conditions that slaves were living in on the island of St. John in the Virgin Islands.

Conditions were devastating. The life expectancy of slaves in the Virgin Islands never went above the age of 30 years old, and this rebellion was caused by a drought and a plague of insects that placed 1,000 enslaved people of St. John at risk of starvation.

This caused an unprecedented amount of slaves to run away, what we call on the island "marooning," living in the bush. This led to the vicious and inhumane Slave Code of 1733. The new rules threatened amputation, breaking on the wheel, burning alive, and other brutal punishment for those who ran away.

This, then, led to 150 slaves, all of whom were part of the Akwamu tribe from Ghana, to begin an uprising. The Akwamu hoped to turn St. John into an Akwamu-controlled state.

On the evening of November 23, the slaves entered the fort on Coral Bay with cane knives concealed in bundles of wood. They proceeded to kill all of the soldiers at the fort. Others across the island, many who were able to escape, escaped to the island of St. Thomas, where they took word to the governor. The governor then, under pressure, sent troops, sent soldiers to St. John, who were then also destroyed.

The next 10 weeks saw guerilla-style warfare between the troops and the Akwamu rebels. Afraid that the rebellion would spread to the nearby island of Tortola, the British sent reinforcements. They were quickly dispatched and quickly rode back to Tortola.

Again, John Maddox, a privateer from the island of St. Kitts, made a deal with the Danish officials to aid the quelling of St. John. He, too, was not successful.

William Vessup, an owner of a plantation, who was in disrepute with the Danes, attempted to lure slaves onto a ship, the organizers of the rebellion, and told them that they would give them food and support if they would

come on the ship. They did not fall for the trickery, and he also was dispatched.

It wasn't until the Spanish Armada and the French came that this rebellion was able to be quelled in 1734, almost 6 months later; and with it, many were jailed. Some were sent to St. Croix to work to death, which was what they decided to give to them, and many also decided not to go back into slavery and jumped off of a cliff on the island to their death—but to freedom.

These 150 Akwamu on the island of St. John were some of the first African people in the Americas to have a sense of freedom, as volatile and short-lived as it might have been.

It is important to acknowledge, however, that, for the majority of enslaved people on the islands of St. John, St. Thomas, and St. Croix, neither outcome would lead to freedom. The enslaved people on the island of St. John and the rest of the Danish West Indies would ultimately wait another 114 years for the next rebellion for their freedom to come.

CELEBRATING THE CAREERS OF THREE CENTRE COUNTY PUBLIC SERVANTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, recently, I had the pleasure of traveling back to Pennsylvania's 15th Congressional District to celebrate the careers of three dedicated public servants in Centre County.

Last month, Centre County Treasurer Richard Fornicola and Centre County Controller Chuck Witmer served their last day at the Centre County Courthouse and began their much-deserved retirements.

Rich Fornicola began his term as Centre County treasurer in January 2000 and has worked diligently over the past two decades overseeing every penny that was received and disbursed by Centre County, including hunting permits and fishing licenses, as well as overseeing bids for county contracts.

Chuck Witmer has spent 15 years in public service in Centre County, having worked as the deputy controller for just under 4 years before being elected to serve as county controller. Over the years, Chuck has exhibited fantastic leadership that includes overseeing the county ledger, seeing the budget is adhered to, completing the county audit, and more.

This week, Prothonotary and Clerk of Courts Debra Immel will be serving her last day at the courthouse as well. Debra began her career in Centre County in 1976 as a department clerk and quickly rose through the ranks of deputy prothonotary and acting prothonotary. In 1999, Debra was elected to her current position and has served in county government ever since.

Mr. Speaker, together, these individuals have given more than 90 years of

service to Centre County, and they have worked hard to make Centre County a better place to live. I would like to congratulate Rich and Chuck and Debra on their retirements and wish them all the best in their new life chapter.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF COACH JOHN MCKISSICK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CUNNINGHAM) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of longtime Summerville High School football coach, Hall of Famer, John McKissick, who passed away on Thanksgiving Day.

Coach McKissick was the greatest high school football coach our country has ever seen. In fact, he held the record for the most wins of any football coach anywhere at any single level. Over the course of his 62-year career, he led the Green Wave to 10 State championships and 621 wins.

Coach McKissick was a mentor and a father figure to thousands of student athletes. In total, he coached over 5,000 young men throughout his career.

I had the honor of attending his funeral earlier this week, and I got to meet several of his former players, many in their fifties, sixties, seventies, and even eighties, who all told me about the incredible impact he had on their lives.

He famously told his players that it is not about the Xs and Os; it's about the Jims and the Joes. He called his players his boys. He treated them like family because they were, and that feeling was mutual.

It is impossible to imagine high school football or Summerville without him, but his amazing legacy will live on forever.

May God bless his family, his friends, former players, and the entire Summerville community.

Thank you for everything, Coach.

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RECOGNIZING THE NEWBERRY FIRE DEPARTMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. NORMAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NORMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the heroic actions by members of the Newberry Fire Department.

On March 1, 2019, the alpha shift, comprised of Captain Andrew Morris, Lieutenant Brian Beck, Senior Engineer Benjamin Dukes, firefighter Richard Doran, and volunteer firefighter Barry Brown, were working a wreck on Third Street when they received an urgent call of a hit-and-run incident on Louis Rich Road.

The firefighters responded to the call and found the victim of the hit and run